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STARRY

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...OF...
OUR VICTORIOUS ARMY

**FLAG
WEEKLY**

STREET & SMITH,
PUBLISHERS

SHAFTER'S RIGHT HAND

OR HAL MAYNARD'S
GREAT GAME OF STRATEGY



Frederick Cook, Cigar, Tobacco & Book Store, 100 N. Halsted St.
DOUGLAS WELLS.

"UP-YAH!" YELLED LIEUTENANT HAL. SUPERBLY HIS HORSE ROSE, CLEARING THE BARRICADE OF BAYONETS

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Price Five Cents.

Shafter's Right Hand

OR,

Hal Maynard's Great Game of Strategy.

By DOUGLAS WELLS.

First Part.

CHAPTER I.

SCOUTING.

"They're coming, boys, and coming fast."

First Lieutenant Hal Maynard, of General Shafter's staff, sat on the outer edge of a trench that the Spaniards had built to defend the little town near the American mines.

Hal had been sent ashore with a detachment to see whether any of the enemy lingered in the rifle trenches after the furious bombardment by American naval vessels.

It was a dangerous detail.

Had there been any of the enemy there, our hero and his detachment would undoubtedly have been shot to pieces.

But they had arrived at the nearest trench just in time to see the late Spanish defenders scampering across the hollows to the nearest hills.

Hal had ordered his men to fire a volley into them just on general principles.

As a result, several of the enemy had fallen.

Immediately after the volley, our hero had signaled out to the great fleet of transports that the coast was clear for a landing.

That landing had now started. More than thirty boats, towed in strings by tenders from the naval vessels, were now headed for the shore.

In each boat were as many American soldiers as could be crowded in.

All were eager to set foot on Cuban soil.

It was the first army of invasion to reach Cuba. Each soldier was eager to have the boat he was in be the first to reach the shore.

Hal sat, meanwhile, with his feet dangling most unconcernedly over the shore edge of the rifle trench.

To him the honor had fallen of leading the first landing party. He was content that others should have what further glory there was in getting ashore.

A dozen boats reached the beach at once.

NICK CARTER'S DISGUISES ARE WONDERFUL.

Men leaped overboard into the water in the mad scramble to tread the shore of Cuba under their feet.

In a few minutes there were hundreds of Americans on land, quietly forming under their officers.

Little columns went this way and that, the object being to occupy, as a precaution against surprise, the trenches out of which the dons had been shelled.

"This chap is in a hurry," mused Hal, eyeing a captain, who, the instant his foot touched the beach, started up the gentle slope on a fast run.

He caught sight of our hero, turned and headed straight for him.

"Lieutenant Maynard?" he called.

"Yes, sir," responded Hal, scrambling to his feet and saluting his superior in rank.

"Just came by the Seguranca," panted the captain. "Was hailed from the deck, and told to deliver these orders to you with all speed."

He thrust an envelope in Hal's hands.

Our hero tore it open with all haste, and read these words:

"Lieutenant Maynard is hereby directed to call upon Colonel Benders for a second lieutenant and detachment of thirty men. With these and the men he already has, Lieutenant Maynard will scout back into the country for two miles, noting whatever signs there are of the presence of the enemy. Lieutenant Maynard will use his discretion as far as may be necessary, and will as soon as possible report back to the general commanding."

This order bore General Shafter's signature.

Hal's face flushed with pleasure.

It was most important work that he had been ordered to perform.

When advancing through the enemy's country, no work is more important than clever scouting.

If the scout work is well done, the

troops back of him will know just where the enemy are to be found, which will do away with the danger of sudden and overwhelming surprises.

"You seem pleased," observed the captain.

"Am I?" echoed Hal, delightedly. "Oh, just!"

"One more order, lieutenant, which I was instructed to deliver verbally."

Hal looked expectantly at the messenger.

"Your horse is to be sent ashore at once. You will wait for that before starting, lieutenant."

"Thank you. And in the meantime, I will see about my detail."

"That will be as well, no doubt."

Turning, Hal saw that his horse was just then being made to walk the plank at the Seguranca's open port.

The beast splashed into the water, and started at once to swim.

At the same time, a man sitting in the stern of one of the boats, led the animal in the right direction by means of its halter.

"Go down to the beach and catch my horse as it comes ashore," Hal ordered one of his men. "Sergeant, keep the rest here until I send for you."

Full of business, Hal strode away.

Colonel Benders sat upon one of the posts of the little wharf mopping his brow and watching the landing of his men.

Hal showed him his order.

"All right," responded the colonel. "Mr. Smithson!"

The young lieutenant of that name promptly approached his colonel.

"Smithson, pick out thirty good men from your company. You are at Lieutenant Maynard's orders until he releases you. Do whatever he orders."

"Yes, colonel."

Hal stood at one side while the detachment was being made up.

It did not take over a minute.

"March your men up to the railroad track, and halt them," directed Hal.

He fell in himself beside the lieutenant.

"Say," asked Smithson, impetuously, "is there any objection to giving me a hint of what our work is to be?"

"Scouting," answered Hal.

"Eh? Great! Good! Glorious! Do you know, Mr. Maynard, I was afraid it was to be some stupid duty work, such as guarding the property on shore. But scouting just suits me!"

They had reached by this time the spot where Hal had ordered the detachment halted.

Our hero now hurried back to the beach. His horse, saddled and bridled, was waiting for him.

Vaulting into the saddle, Maynard directed the soldier who had held the beast for him to return to the rifle trench and tell the sergeant to join the main detachment at the railroad track.

"I'll be back shortly, lieutenant," cried Hal, as he went by Smithson at a trot.

Galloping a quarter of a mile up the road, Maynard took a good look at the road as he went.

A quarter of a mile from the beach he drew rein.

"This is as far as I'd better go alone," he reflected.

Crack! From a hill-top a quarter of a mile away a rifle spoke. This was followed by a discharge of at least twenty rifles.

Not one of the bullets struck within a hundred yards of our hero.

"Same old Spanish marksmen," chuckled Hal. "I know you fellows well. Will you ever learn better than to

hold your guns at the waist and shoot only in a general direction?"

Nevertheless, it would be foolish to remain there, alone and unable to send a single shot back at the enemy.

So Hal galloped slowly back to where he had left his detachment.

"Bring your men forward, lieutenant, in column of twos. Detail six and a corporal to keep with me. Be on the lookout for a signal at any second to halt."

With light hearts and springy steps the detachment started off. Had the speed-been regulars, they would have cheered. But scouting is serious work. It requires to be done in silence, and with as much stealth as possible.

Posting his advance detail a hundred yards in advance of the main body, Hal rode back to his second in command.

"You heard the firing, Mr. Smithson?"

"Yes, sir."

"A squad opened fire on me from those hills yonder. I expect to find the enemy in small bodies all through this country."

"Are we going far, sir?"

"My present orders call for about two miles. After that, I am to use my discretion."

"The corporal is signaling to you, Mr. Maynard."

Hal looked quickly forward. The non-com. in charge of the advance had halted his detail, and was now making violent gestures.

"He has sighted something, sure. Halt your men, Mr. Smithson."

There was a hill a few hundred yards ahead, surmounted by a block-house.

Hal made up his mind that the enemy, if they were near, had taken to hiding in this block-house and in the trenches that ran around the four sides of the structure.

He expected to be fired upon as he rode forward, but he reached his detail without a shot from anywhere.

"NICK CARTER TO THE RESCUE," IS THE WATCHWORD.

"I saw the door of that old shanty half close, sir," reported the corporal, "and thought it best to halt."

"Quite right, corporal, and we'll soon find out whether the enemy is there."

Raising his sword, our hero signaled Lieutenant Smithson to bring up the main body.

"Throw out your men in skirmishing order, lieutenant, and advance up the hill."

Only a second after the skirmish line had started forward, there came a flash of fire from the block-house.

The first battle between the Spaniards and the invading Americans was on.

CHAPTER II.

TAKING A PRISONER.

"Lie down!"

Hal roared out the command, which was repeated by Smithson.

Then came the order to return the enemy's fire.

American bullets pelted the block-house and thudded the dirt before it.

For several rounds the Spanish fire kept up.

Lying down flat as they were, none of the Americans were hit.

Only Hal remained an exposed mark.

Disdaining to dismount, he remained seated in saddle, looking on with flashing eyes.

"Better advance a little, lieutenant," he called.

At the word Smithson led his men some thirty feet up the hill on a quick run.

Just as the Spanish rifles began to talk again Smithson gave the order to drop.

An American volley answered the enemy's.

So far none had been hit on either side.

Yet this skirmishing against a block-

house is apt to prove the most dangerous work in modern war.

It is when the men rise to advance that they are in deadly peril.

If the enemy are good marksmen they are bound to hit some of the attacking party.

On the other hand the assailants have little chance of inflicting damage unless they get decidedly close to the defenders.

The latter are firing, all the while, through a slit that is not more than two or three inches high.

Nor is this slit more than a few inches above the ground. The men in the block-house stand down in a pit or cellar, which brings only the head and shoulders on a level with the slit.

With good marksmen in such a block-house it is almost impossible for infantry alone to dislodge them.

"If those fellows could shoot," muttered Hal, "we'd have no business here."

But he remained on his horse, the only conspicuous object for the Spaniards to shoot at.

Experience had taught him that, in fighting Spaniards, the most conspicuous place is apt to be the safest.

Riding closer, he called to Smithson:

"Lieutenant, watch your chance to follow up the last advance with another."

Smithson nodded.

As soon as the enemy's fire slackened, he led his men on another fifty foot dash up the hillside.

"Aim every shot at the ring slit, men," called Hal, riding up close to them.

A yell, and then a second, showed that some of the shots had gone into the block-house.

But their losses made the Spaniard's mad. They replied with the straightest fire they were capable of.

"THE UNSEEN EYE" HAS A GIRL DETECTIVE.

"Getting warm," murmured Hal, slipping out of saddle.

Forcing his horse to lie down, he sauntered forward to where Smithson stood.

"Too high up, on a horse's back, eh?" smiled the second lieutenant.

"Horses are going to be valuable marching over these hills," replied Hal. "I'm going to save mine as long as I can."

While they talked, the young officers, both of whom disdained to lie down, watched the block-house attentively.

"Their fire is slackening," suggested Smithson.

"They may be getting out through the door," replied Hal.

"And we are on the wrong side to command the door," grunted Smithson. "With your permission I'll shift the men around to that side of the hill."

"Not a bit of it," negatived Hal. "Spaniards firing from a block-house are apt to be troublesome. Running away through the open we have them just where we want them. Give them a chance to get out. But its time to make another advance, lieutenant."

Smithson made another rush, getting this time within a hundred feet of the structure.

The fire from only two rifles opposed them. Not a shot took effect.

"On the next rush, lieutenant," ordered Hal, approaching his subordinate, order your men to thrust their guns through the slits and fire across the interior of the house."

"Can I make the rush now, sir?"

"At once."

"Up! Forward! Double quick!"

Onward swept the little line. Hot shot opposed them. Over the rifle pits leaped the men. They knelt before the block-house, and as many as could jammed the

muzzles of their rifles through the firing slit on one side.

"Fire!"

Bullets swept the interior.

Just before the volley a scared-looking Spanish private made a dash for the doorway.

He got out, started down the hillside a long way behind his comrades.

But Hal, darting around the corner just as his men ceased firing, espied the fugitive.

"We want him," muttered Hal, speeding off after the fellow.

The Spaniard, hearing sounds of pursuit, cast a terrified look back over his shoulder.

"Halt!" shouted our hero, in Spanish.

"Keep back!" warned the Spaniard.

"Halt!"

"Keep back, or I'll shoot!"

"Shoot and be hanged! You're a dead man if you don't surrender!"

"Keep back!"

Both were now running at their best speed. Hal was slowly gaining.

Realizing this, the Spanish soldier let the barrel of his gun rest over his shoulder as he ran.

Ducking two feet to one side, Maynard continued to pursue as swiftly as ever.

Crack! Though Hal had calculated that he was safely out of range, the ball went within six inches of his head.

Crack! crack! The next two shots, fired without aim, went decidedly wild.

Hearing the foe still coming, the Spaniard cast another look over his shoulder.

He gave a gasp, for Hal Maynard was within six feet of him.

"Better hold up!" jeered the young lieutenant.

Quickly enough the fellow obeyed, but not in the way expected.

Drawing a knife from under his ragged

READ "THE GREAT DETECTIVE TRIO."

blouse, he straightened swiftly up, aiming a blow full at the American's heart.

It was a swift, close call for Hal.

He had only time to throw up one arm, which crossed the Spaniard's.

But that move warded off the knife's point, which did no more than slightly rip the young officer's blouse.

In a twinkling, Hal's right hand clutched the fellow's wrist.

A quick wrench, and the knife went flying through the air.

"Car-r-r-r-rajo!" howled the Spaniard.

He was struggling in Maynard's grip, but was not yet ready to admit himself a prisoner.

Lowering his head quickly, he made a snap at Hal's wrist.

"So that's your game?" muttered the boy, letting go his hold.

His "mad" was up.

Released, the Spaniard turned to dart away, but Hal was at much too close quarters to permit that.

Springing forward, he caught at the fugitive's collar, swung him around, and then—

Smash! Hal struck straight out from the shoulder, the most forcible blow he could land.

It struck on the enemy's mouth.

Like lightning, our hero followed it up with a blow from his other fist, which landed on the same spot.

Like a tree that has been cut, the Spaniard lurched forward and hit the ground.

He was not likely to bite again, for most of his front teeth were missing now.

"Car-r-r-r-r-ramba! Oh, you brutal Yankee pig!" groaned the fellow.

"If you get up, I'll give you more of it," retorted Hal, hot-bloodedly.

His invitation was not accepted. It was

plain that the foe knew when he was well supplied.

Footsteps sounded behind them as Lieutenant Smithson and a half a dozen soldiers reached the spot.

"Car-r-r-r-rajo! All the Yankee pigs are brutes," sobbed the fellow, spitting out a mouthful of blood.

"Lieutenant," cried Mr. Smithson, lifting his sombrero, "I salute you! I have heard of you before, as several kinds of a scrapper. What I have seen of you this morning shows me that reports were not exaggerated. Jove, what a fist you must have!"

"I hardened it in these same Cuban woods," smiled Hal, coolly. "If the fellow had confined himself to the weapons of war, I wouldn't have done that to him. But the man who draws a knife raises all the bad blood that's in me. Detail a man, Mr. Smithson, to take the prisoner back to the town."

"To whom shall I hand him over, sir?"

"Blessed if I know," laughed Hal.

Still groaning out against the brutality of the Yankees, the prisoner was marched away at the point of a bayonet, the soldier detailed to this duty making wry faces over the certainty of being left out of the rest of the scouting expedition.

"Are there any killed or wounded in the block-house?" questioned Hal.

"I don't know, sir. Didn't stop to see when I saw you after that rascal."

"We'll go back," said Hal.

Three wounded and two dead Spanish soldiers greeted their gaze as they entered the structure.

"We'll question these wounded ones," said Hal, in an undertone to Smithson. "But first, we'll look to their wounds. A little unexpected kindness sometimes makes these fellows more communicative."

With the assistance of a couple of

soldiers, Hal spent ten minutes in bandaging the wounds inflicted by American bullets.

Smithson, meantime, was outside, keeping vigilant watch of the near-by hills.

"Lieutenant," he reported, hastening in, "I caught sight through my glasses, just now, of two or three heads of men watching us from the brush on that hill over to the northward."

"Open fire on them if they show up again," directed Hal. "Fire from the inside of the block-house, so they won't know what we're up to until it comes."

Three men were accordingly stationed at the slit on the north side of the house.

"Behind them stood Smithson, glasses to his eyes, keenly alert.

"There they are," he muttered. "Take aim, men. Ready?"

"Yes, sir," came three responses.

"Fire!"

As the report rang out, the three strange heads vanished.

"Don't know whether we hit 'em or not, sir," reported Smithson.

"Send out four men singly to scout in that direction. Tell them to take no risks, but to fall back at the first sign of hostility."

Before they had gone twenty yards from the block-house they halted, these four scouts.

At least two hundred Spaniards showed there, and an instant later they began firing.

"Retreat! Don't waste time!" shouted Hal.

His warning was quickly heeded. Back came the four, pell-mell, a storm of bullets passing over their heads.

"Twelve men in the block-house—the rest in the trenches!" shouted the young commander.

So quickly did the force move that

every man was in position by the time the four scouts reached the summit.

"Start your men to firing, lieutenant," ordered Hal. "Tell them to fire slowly and straight."

Then the American rifles began to talk, sweeping the crest of the enemy's hill.

"Jupiter!" suddenly muttered Hal.

Sweeping the surrounding country with his field-glasses he caught sight of two more detachments of the enemy advancing from other directions.

"They mean to surround us," spoke Smithson in our hero's ear. "It matters little. We could hold this against a thousand Spaniards."

"But we can't go forward," grumbled Hal.

"I know it."

"And that's what we're here for, Smithson. We're hemmed in, now, surer than fate. Fire straight, boys. I think you've potted some of the enemy already."

As Hal finished his survey, he gave a start of dismay.

From the manœuvring of the enemy it was apparent that their object was to surround him.

A thousand men against forty was sure to be a stiff fight!

CHAPTER III.

A CRITICAL SITUATION.

"We've got to have support."

Hal made this announcement with a knowledge that if the support did not soon arrive the position was likely to fall into the hands of the foe.

"We've got to have it soon, too," put in Smithson.

"Oh, we are good to hold out here for three quarters of an hour. But after that, if the Spanish are the least good on earth they will be able to pot us."

WHERE OTHERS FAIL, NICK CARTER SUCCEEDS.

And Hal, pulling out his dispatch book, sank down upon one knee, resting the book on the other, prepared to write a message for help.

Smithson remained standing and watching the enemy through his glass.

"Lieutenant," he muttered, "judging by the way the rascals are closing in on us a man who starts a full two minutes later won't have the slightest show on earth to get through."

"I'm winding up," announced Hal. "Lieutenant, you know your men. Pick out a good one to take this back to town."

"If you'll permit it, sir, I'll go myself."

"You?" echoed Hal, looking up.

"Yes, sir."

"But I'm the only other officer here. To risk half of our officers seems like taking big chances."

"This is officer's work, sir," urged Smithson. "If you'll let me go, I'll be greatly obliged."

"Go, then," replied Hal. "Take my horse, too. Ride like the wind, old fellow, or the Spaniards will get you."

With a bound Smithson was off. He found Maynard's horse still lying down as it had been left.

"Up, old fellow," bellowed the second lieutenant, giving the animal a slap on its flank.

With a bound Smithson was in saddle.

"By Jove," muttered Hal, watching him, my friend has a tougher chance than I thought. Hullo—blazes!"

At the top of a hill by which Smithson must ride within a hundred yards a dozen Spanish heads suddenly appeared.

"He's down in the hollow. He can't see them. They'll shoot him to pieces!" exclaimed Maynard, rapidly. "Here, boys, shoot the gravel out of that hill!"

And Hal pointed to the danger that menaced Lieutenant Smithson.

Crack! crack! crack! Smithson was near the base of the hill. He discovered his danger just as the bullets began to spat around him.

Snatching up a Mauser rifle that had been dropped by one of the wounded prisoners, Hal quickly got the range, and pumped ten shots into the foes who had ambushed Smithson.

How the latter got through was a miracle. Had it not been for the confusion caused by the volleys from the block-house, the plucky young West Pointer must have been riddled.

But he got past, rose over a rise of the ground, and would soon be in sight of the town.

"Good business, boys," cheered Hal. "You saved Mr. Smithson's life."

"Glad we did, sir," came the answer from a sergeant. "He's the finest young officer in the regiment."

The command, under orders, were crouching either in the block-house or the rifle trenches beyond. Hal, alone, stood up.

It was dangerous, but duty. It was imperative that he should note every move of the enemy.

The skirmishing was on, now, hot and furious. While the block-house was not entirely surrounded, it was practically so, since even had our hero desired to retreat, it would have been impossible to do so without losing a great many men.

Spit! spat! came the Mauser bullets, throwing up the dirt in fine showers. Ching! against and through the zinc sheets that covered the sides of the structure.

In the distance all that could be seen were the puffs of smoke from the enemy's rifles, save once in a while when a detachment of Spaniards would suddenly

rise to their feet, dart forward a few yards and then flop down on the ground once more.

"Haven't lost a man yet," Hal congratulated himself.

To one uninitiated it seemed marvelous that so hot a fire could be kept up, passing by both of the contending forces with little or no damage.

The Americans were protected by their trenches. So long as they did not stand up and expose themselves, they were in little danger, save, possibly, from deflecting balls.

As for the Spaniards, they were flat upon the ground, and a man lying prostrate on the earth at a distance of from a quarter to half a mile is in little risk of being hit. A bullet may strike him, but the chances are a hundred to one against it.

"Confound them!" muttered our hero, wrathfully, just after the enemy had made another twelve yard dash without losing a man.

The Spanish were surely gaining ground. If they got near enough to make a sudden dash, Hal did not need to be told that even the poorest troops in the world, when they numbered a thousand, could wipe his command out.

"You men in the trenches," he directed, "keep up the general fire. Those in the block-house reserve your fire until the enemy advance. When they get on their feet, fire as fast and as straight as you can. If you don't pot a few of them we are as good as finished, boys."

Hal next picked up the Mauser which he had fired, secured the cartridge box of one of the wounded Spaniards, and dodged into the block-house.

There was a rude set of stairs, leading up to a tiny conning tower on the top.

Standing here, the young lieutenant

could see all of the surrounding country by merely turning his head.

"I can help the fellows shoot, too, I reckon," he muttered, thrusting the rifle through the slit.

He had not long to wait. A company of the enemy sprang to their feet and ran crouching for a distance of fifteen yards nearer the block-house.

Crack! crack! spoke Hal's rifle twice.

The soldiers underneath him were equally alert.

"A few of the greasers toppled that time," mused the young commander, grimly. "Hello! I'm catching it now!"

There was a perfect patter of bullets against the conning tower, which offered a conspicuous mark.

Two of them came through the firing slit with an exaggerated whistling that made our hero dodge.

"I've given those rascals a good line on myself," he muttered. "They're keeping it up, too."

It would be useless to say that Maynard felt no fear. With several hundred men aiming at him he certainly wished himself elsewhere.

Yet he would not leave the conning tower. His post there was altogether too advantageous a one to give up. It is one thing to be scared, but quite another for an officer to let his alarm drive him from his post of duty.

Many a time the young American let his gaze wander toward the town.

Where was Smithson? Had he been waylaid further in?

If he was dead and his message undelivered, things would go hard with the scouting party beleaguered in the block-house.

"They may hear our firing from the town, though the wind's against it," reflected Hal. "Even if they do hear us, they may think that we are Cubans."

YOU'RE NOT IN IT IF YOU DON'T READ ABOUT NICK CARTER.

Reinforcements aren't likely to start until the officer in command there receives my dispatch."

The Spaniards by this time had covered half of the distance from the first point of attack. They had covered it, too, with losses that were not severe enough to discourage them.

"Lieutenant?" hailed one of the sergeants from below.

"Yes?"

"Ammunition out in the trenches is running low."

"How many rounds?"

"About twelve or fifteen on an average."

Our hero gave a gasp of dismay.

To add to the peril of the position the Spanish bugles were sounding all along the line.

"They're getting ready to drop skirmishing tactics and try a rush," flashed Maynard.

If the enemy did do this, and had the grit to come through a sharp fire, they would soon be hand to hand with the American scouts.

"Aim too low rather than too high," called out our hero. Boys you want to do some pretty shooting now. If we don't check that advance we're done for."

And added to himself:

"I doubt if we'll check it!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE ATTACK AND RESCUE.

"Cease firing!"

Some of the soldiers in the trenches were still shooting whenever a head showed itself.

This, in the low state of ammunition, would not do.

"There is going to be an assault, men, I reckon."

Hal's voice sounded earnest but care-free as he spoke to his soldiers.

"If there is an assault," he went on, "we'll need every cartridge to handle the rush with. Don't waste a shot. Don't fire a shot as long as the rascals stay where they are. Shoot only when you see them coming."

His men nodded, waiting coolly.

Probably there was not one in the detachment so dull as to imagine the prospect to be hopeful, but it is a peculiar fact that trained soldiers are apt to be coolest in moments of the greatest peril.

"When the assault begins," went on Hal, calculatingly, "never mind how hot the row may be on some other side of you. Let each man stand just where he is now, until—until——"

Hal hesitated before he finished truthfully:

"Until the finish!"

"All right, lieutenant."

"Count on us."

"You've got the right stuff in you, men," cried Hal, admiringly. "Now one more bit of advice. If we get hand to hand with those fellows, and you find them coming too fast, don't turn to run. You'll find that we can give them more to think about if we stand close together. If the enemy get too close, fix your bayonets without waiting for the order."

Hal did not tell what was passing in his mind. He had come down out of the tower, and with the loaded Mauser in his hand, had taken his place in one of the trenches.

He had a presentiment that, if the enemy got to close quarters, he would be killed in the beginning of the rush.

"Not even a flag around to get a last glimpse at," he murmured.

Just then his eye caught sight of a crude metallic emblem of Old Glory pinned to one of the soldier's sombreros.

Involuntarily Maynard's hand went up

NICK CARTER HAS SEVERAL BOY ASSISTANTS.

to his own sombrero, lifting it in a last salute to the flag.

"Now, I'm ready for whatever must come," he felt.

Around, out by the enemy's lines, all was ominously still. Only a few were visible, and of them only the tops of their straw hats showed.

Yet the young lieutenant could not help feeling that something was coming soon.

That lull meant something.

He was right.

Suddenly on the clear morning air rose the quick, sharp notes of Spanish bugles sounding the charge.

They were up, and coming on, the enemy!

"Don't fire—wait for the word!" warned Hal.

He waited, himself in a fever of suspense, watching the onrushing lines.

"Don't shoot, boys, but take aim, and be ready."

The Spaniards were yelling now. From the failure of the Americans to fire upon them, the dusky soldiers concluded that the men at the block-house were out of ammunition.

It was to be an easy victory. The little brown men were confident, happy.

"Steady!" came Hal's warning preparation and then:

"Fire!"

That thin line of red that shot along the rifle trenches did splendid work against the enemy.

Gap after gap was visible in the Spanish ranks. The foe halted, then flopped to the earth.

"Give them the same when they get up!" cheered Hal. "Boys, we're good for a volley or two yet!"

"You bet!" came the vociferous cry.

If they were to be annihilated, they meant to die gamely.

Once more the bugle gave them warning that the enemy were ready to rise and come on.

"Fire now at will, but make every bullet count," ordered the young commander.

What a blazing and crackling there was! But the Spanish, evidently urged on by their officers, faltered no more.

Where gaps occurred, they closed them up as best they could, and still came on.

"The finish!" gritted Hal, compressing his lips and firing as fast as he could take steady aim.

New bugle calls smote the air.

Hal fairly jumped, his blood bounding through his veins.

"The American calls?" he cried, jubilantly. "Boys do you hear that?"

On the air was borne to them a far-away but sturdy cry of:

"Remember the Maine!"

Br-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r! It was the first volley of the support coming up—fired at far-off range, but causing a stampede among the Spaniards.

Several of the latter fell, a taste of what the execution would be when the oncoming column got nearer.

"Pump your last cartridges into them, boys!" roared the commander. "Fire fast as you want to now!"

He blazed away himself until he saw the late attacking forces waver and then fall back.

Running around on the town side of the block-house, Maynard beheld a glorious sight.

The first battalion of a United States infantry regiment was in full view on the near side of the hill. The second battalion was just coming into sight on the crest.

No wonder the Spaniards ran! A full regiment of United States infantry was

NICK CARTER TELLS YOU JUST HOW A DETECTIVE IS TRAINED.

far too much for them in the unprotected open.

The need of action over, our hero stood leaning against the block-house, which furnished welcome support.

His men crawled out of the trenches, hunting for the shady side of the structure and sat there fanning themselves.

As for the foe, they continued to retreat until they were out of sight.

At a steady tramp, tramp, on came the support. Hal, studying the colors through his glass, saw that the reinforcements comprised the whole of the gallant Twenty-second United States Infantry.

With soldierly stride the regiment came on, Hal's command leaping to their feet to cheer as the column came up.

"Got through in time, eh?" greeted Lieutenant Smithson, rushing up and dismounting.

He was greatly surprised by Hal's answer:

"You saved my life, old man."

"Nonsense," replied the second lieutenant.

"Fact."

"But you could have held out for fifteen minutes yet."

"Not for three. Our ammunition was all but gone. I had a presentiment that, if the enemy got close to us, I would have been killed."

"Glad I got through, then, as soon as I did," was Smithson's cheerful rejoinder.

Now the regiment's colonel rode up, saying:

"Lieutenant Maynard, I am ordered to hold this position until my orders are changed. If you encounter more than you can attend to further on on the road, I am ordered to send you such help as you need."

"Thank you, colonel. I shall give my men five minutes' rest, and then push forward."

The colonel nodded his approval.

At the end of five minutes by the watch, Lieutenant Smithson, at our hero's order, gave the command to fall in.

Marching down to the road, the detachment turned once more toward the interior.

"You had a tough time, then?" questioned Smithson, walking beside our hero's horse.

"Tough? If you had reached us five minutes later, you'd have found us cleaned out, and the Twenty-second would now be engaged in taking the position from the Spanish."

"I hurried, too."

"I'm sure you did, old man."

"If you weren't," laughed Smithson, "you could tell by the wet condition of your horse. I made him pound the road, I can tell you!"

"You had a tough time getting away, Smithson."

"For a minute or two, yes; but your overhead fire saved me. Jove, I'm sorry I missed the whole of the fight. I was only in time to see the boys of the Twenty-second pour in their long range fire."

"Sorry you missed the fight, eh?" smiled Hal.

"You bet!"

"Don't let it worry you, my boy. You'll see plenty of fight before an hour goes by."

"Think so?"

"Rather!" was Hal's energetic response. "Why, my boy, this is country that the Spaniards know like a book. You'll find the hills and woods full of block-houses and rifle pits. They'll be prepared to stop us every few hundred yards. If we chase them out, you'll find them ready to give the same bother over again at the next stopping place. In the rest of our two miles we're sure to have five or six fights."

"ALLEE SAME, BULLEE NICK CARTER!"

"That's what I like to hear," replied Smithson, enthusiastically.

"How long are you out of West Point?"

"This year's class."

"I thought so," replied Hal. "I've been doing little else but fight since April. Do you know what I'd like to see, Smithson?"

"What?"

"Peace."

Smithson opened his eyes very wide.

"For such a terror in a fight as you are, Mr. Maynard, I can't understand the sentiments you are giving me. What keeps you here?"

"Duty," was the laconic answer.

"And you don't like fighting?"

"Never did."

"By Jove," murmured Smithson, thoughtfully, "I've heard other officers who've seen a good deal of service talk the same way. Maybe when I've seen more I shan't care so much about it, either."

"It's one thing," went on Maynard, earnestly, "to like fighting, and another thing to do it when its necessary to uphold justice and right."

"But speaking of fighting——"

"You'll know a little more about it very soon, unless I'm mistaken," broke in our hero, pointing ahead.

Sitting in saddle, and being therefore higher up, he had caught the first glimpse, as they came over a rise in the road, of a block-house less than a quarter of a mile away.

"Don't halt your men, lieutenant," Hal continued, dropping the social tone for the business one, "but be ready to order them down on the ground the second we're fired on!"

There was not a man in the command now, but knew what it meant to attack a block-house.

There was no hurrah business—no light hearts in the detachment.

It was serious, deadly business from which not all of the good fellows now marching could hope to come out alive!

Second Part.

CHAPTER V.

ANOTHER BLOCK-HOUSE CAPTURED.

Thirty seconds later a jet of red burst from the nearest side of the block-house. At the same instant came the order:

"Lie down!"

Hal was already dismounted and leading his horse.

As the first burst of bullets swept over them, he dodged into the thicket.

Leaving the animal there, he returned to the edge of the road taking up his stand by a tree.

"Answer the fire," he directed Smithson. "Tell the men to aim altogether at the firing slit of the block-house, unless some of the enemy should directly expose themselves."

Right soon the crackling began, the Americans doing brisk work with the ammunition they had gained from the Twenty-second.

"Try a short advance," urged Hal.

Eighteen yards proved the limit of the advance. The Americans lost a man wounded in getting that far.

"Shot through the shoulder, eh?" asked Hal, crouching over to the unfortunate one.

"Yes, sir."

"And nowhere else?"

"No, sir."

"Lie where you are, then, until we get the rascals out of that block-house. As soon as you can go along the road without putting yourself under fire, get back to the town."

"I'd rather go on, sir," urged the soldier, wistfully.

"How far could you get with a ball in the right shoulder?"

"I could fire a few more shots," pleaded the earnest fellow.

"Don't attempt it," rejoined Hal. "Report back on wounded list at the first field hospital you can find."

"All right, sir," but the wounded patriot heaved a sigh of disappointment.

"They're standing us off too well, old chap," muttered Hal, returning to his second in command. Take half of the boys, and work around to the other side of the hill. Keep up a hot line on the firing slit of the block-house."

"A dash?" suggested Smithson.

"Yes, if you want to lose two-thirds of your men. If you want to get there the most sensible way, let them crawl on their stomachs. Fire back, too, if you're fired on too heavily."

Smithson proved himself a good soldier by obeying orders strictly. It was twenty minutes before Hal heard a full, steady, regular fire which showed that Smithson's detachment was at last in place.

For the next ten minutes the firing was brisk.

"I'll take a look at Smithson," decided our hero.

In working around to the other's position he followed the same tactics he had ordered, crawling like a snake over the most sheltered route he could find.

Two bullets passed through his sombrero; a third struck his sabre hilt, while a fourth nearly disabled his Mauser rifle.

But he reached Smithson unwounded.

"Had one of my boys in getting around here," reported the second lieutenant. "Ever since then I've been trying to find a chance to advance, but the fire is too hot."

"The enemy have plenty of ammunition, too," observed Hal.

"You think so?"

"I'm sure of it by the way they fire. This isn't the first time, you know, that I've been against Spaniards."

"It'll require an hour or more, then, to take that block-house," groaned Smithson, who wanted to do everything in a hurry.

"An hour?" echoed Hal. "It would take hours, besides which we would fall out of ammunition before the enemy did."

"You're not going to give up the attempt?" queried Smithson, disappointedly.

"I'm going to give up the effort to take it without help," rejoined Lieutenant Maynard, decidedly.

"It would be glorious to take the position without sending back for help," urged Smithson.

"Yes, but foolhardy. We've but forty men against thirty, and they've the advantage of being where we can't hit them. Let me have one of your men."

"For courier's work?"

"Yes."

"Joblin will do that best."

"Joblin," directed Hal, as that soldier crawled forward, "go down the hill, get my horse, ride to the colonel, and tell him, with my compliments, what we've found here. Tell him that I think a battalion will do the trick as quickly as it can be done."

"Yes, sir."

Joblin turned to go, but half rose, in order to get more quickly off on his mission.

It was a foolhardy thing to do, for the air was full of bullets.

"Man," roared Hal, "get down."

Joblin obeyed, involuntarily. He

lurched forward—struck, but no groan came from him.

"Another man, Mr. Smithson."

"Bailey had better go."

"Did you hear my instructions to the other man, Bailey?" questioned Hal.

"Yes, sir."

"Then go, but be more careful."

"Yes, sir."

Bailey started off, while Hal crept over to Joblin. The poor fellow had been shot through the hip. His face was white and set, but he uttered no complaint.

"It was my own fault, sir," said Joblin through his set teeth.

"The ball came out," discovered Hal, inspecting the wound. "I'll bind it up for you, my boy. When the relief comes we'll get you back to town."

In a few moments our hero had the wound as well attended to as it could be done until Joblin could reach a surgeon.

As our hero turned about, he slipped throwing up one hand to recover his balance.

Zip! Something skimmed the knuckles of the hand.

"Grazed by a ball," muttered Maynard.

"Only a scratch and I'm lucky."

Just ahead of him on the ground lay a stick. Reaching out for it the young lieutenant hoisted his sombrero on the end of the stick being careful to keep the hand close to the ground.

In no more than five seconds four bullets passed through the sombrero.

"See that," propounded Hal reaching Smithson's side and exhibiting the hat. "On a charge up the hill we'd last perhaps fifteen yards before the last one of us got dropped."

"I reckon you're right," acknowledged the second lieutenant. "War is very different to what I thought it was. At the Point I used to think that these lie-down skirmish tactics were nonsense. To-

day's style of fighting is more bloody than I had looked for."

"How can it be otherwise," demanded Hal. "There are thirty men over there just beyond us. Each one is capable of firing twenty-three shots a minute, and we're so close that it doesn't take good marksmanship to hit us."

"We're running low on ammunition, sir," reported a sergeant, crawling up to where the two officers stood.

"Pass the word around to the men," was Hal's order, "to confine themselves to sharpshooting unless the Spaniards try to come out and rush us, and I don't believe they will."

As soon as the American fire slackened up, the Spanish fire did the same.

"That's first rate," confided our hero to his second in command. "The enemy are running short of cartridges, too."

"We'll soon get them, then."

When the battalion I've sent for comes up."

Smithson sighed. He would have much preferred to see a spirited charge. He was likely to learn, before many more days, that the commander who succeeds with the least loss of life is the best commander.

To their rear a bugle sounded.

"Thank Heaven," muttered Hal, fervently, as he glanced back and saw a battalion deploying into line of skirmish.

Then there came another bugle call, a signal to his own men to lie low.

In a minute more the battalion's fire swept against the block-house.

There were sharpshooters with that support, and getting into good position they made things lively for the firing slit of the little fort.

"Those chaps are done for," muttered Hal, as he saw the fire from the block-house become fainter and fainter. "Pass

the word, Mr. Smithson, and we'll pull out."

Five minutes later the scouting party was on the road, with a captured block-house to the rear.

Knowing the danger of surprises, Lieutenant Hal detailed two scouts to go ahead on the right flank, and two more on the left.

"Those fellows are signaling us," reported Lieutenant Smithson, as, after ten minutes more of marching, the two men ahead on the left waved back urgent signals from the brow of a low hill.

"They want the whole command, evidently," observed Maynard, after watching the signals. "Left oblique, Mr. Smithson. Caution the men to go quietly, too."

Only two or three minutes later Hal, crouching at the brow of the hill and looking down on the other side, saw a scene that made his blood run cold and then hot.

CHAPTER VI.

AVENGED.

It was no wonder that the young lieutenant's face grew first white and next red.

The same scene made Smithson boil with rage.

In a little gully below a scene was transpiring that, for downright atrocity, could have few parallels.

Stripped, save for a cloth over the loins, a Cuban stood tied to a tree.

Strapped down to a litter near him lay a young Cuban woman.

Between this pair, acting as inquisitors, stood a trio of Spanish officers.

Squatting around on the ground, or lolling against the slope, were the men of a company of Spanish infantry.

At the feet of the officers glowed the

embers of a fire. Into these embers were thrust three irons.

On the Cuban's arms, legs and chest were several dark-brown spots where the flesh had been burned crisp.

The woman was, apparently, unharmed, but it was toward her that the man bound to the tree cast many an anguished look.

"You are coming to your senses, dog?" brutally demanded the eldest of the officers, the captain.

"I cannot do what you want," replied the Cuban, firmly.

"You prefer, then, that we should go in the way we have been proceeding?"

"I cannot prevent you," was the sullen answer.

"Oh, yes, you can," broke in the captain, readily. "You have only to promise—to swear—to do what we ask of you, and you will be a free man at once, a happy man."

"I could never be happy again, if I were to do what you ask," sighed the wretched victim.

"And why not?"

"Can you not understand, even if you are a Spaniard," was the courageous retort, "that the man who betrays his country can never be happy again?"

"Dog, your compatriots are not the Americans."

"True."

"And we only ask that you betray the Americans into our trap. We have not asked you to lead Cubans to their death."

"It would be the same if I were to decoy Americans to such a fate as you have in store for them."

"Then, you Cuban dog, you confess that you love the Americans, too?"

"Why should I not?" cried the Cuban, proudly. "Have they not come to help us? Do not they promise to rid the island forever of the Spaniards? Will they

NICK CARTER IS ALWAYS ON HAND.

not put a stop, forever, to just such brutal scenes as you are this moment enacting? Yes, I do love the Americans! Not all the tortures you can devise would make me consent to the infamy you suggest."

"We shall yet see," laughed the Spaniard, irre-

Turning to one of his men, he ordered: "Andreas, another touch."

What followed happened before gasping Hal could shout a protest.

Springing to his feet as nimbly as a panther, the soldier addressed sprang to his feet.

Bending over the fire, he snatched up one of the irons, wheeled about like a flash and held the glowing end close to the victim's right leg.

"Touch his flesh!" jeered the captain.

Sizz-zz! The horrified spectators above could hear and smell the victim's flesh burn.

"O-o-oo-oh!" groaned the miserable Cuban.

"How much longer will you be able to endure this?" laughed the captain.

"While life lasts," came the indomitable answer.

The words were spoken with a ring of sincerity that showed the boast to be no mere idle talk.

"Car-r-r-ramba!" snarled the Spaniard. "It is easy to see that you are a stubborn dog. You love this island, which you dare to call your country. Let us see if you also love your sister."

The Cuban's face, at this cunning threat, now took on a more ghastly hue than even the torture had been able to bring out.

"We have interested you, now," spoke the Spanish captain, eagerly. "Ah, well, why not yield at once, and save your sister the first touch of torture?"

Though the Cuban's lips twitched, he remained silent.

Not so his sister.

"Do not heed them, Manuel," she spoke, bravely. "We will show them, you and I, that even the Cuban women have more courage than the Spaniards."

"I believe you to be brave, senorita," retorted the captain, turning and raising his hat with a mocking smile.

"But let us see whether your brother is brave enough to see you endure the torture that he is stubborn enough to suffer himself."

"If you are not, my brother," appealed the girl, striving, though in vain, to raise her head sufficiently to look into her dear one's face, "shut your eyes and numb your ears while I prove to these dastards that the Cuban women are as worthy of the name as the Cuban men."

Manuel groaned once more.

"Do you weaken?" questioned the captain, with his searching eyes still on the man's face.

"No!"

"But consider——"

"I can consider nothing," was the abrupt reply. "I refuse to be a party to any scheme for American ruin."

"Then your sister——"

"Will bless the chance I know," answered Manuel, proudly, "to become a martyr to her country."

"We shall see," snorted the enemy.

Turning, he gazed devouringly at the girl.

She, seeing the wolfish look in his eyes, shuddered.

"You are very handsome, senorita," he leered.

She glared back defiantly at her tormentor, but made no reply.

"It would be a sin to see you suffer," smiled the captain, mockingly, while his

two lieutenants gathered closer to watch the infamous drama.

"You are ready to sacrifice yourself for Cuba, senorita."

"Always," came the passionate answer. "I would die, now, if I could first remove so dastardly an enemy as you."

"But as to your beauty? Most women prize that."

"It is little to me."

"You would sacrifice it, then?"

"Always for my country—or for our allies."

"We shall see. I am going to put you to the test."

With which savagely uttered words, the captain wheeled quickly upon the brother.

That poor fellow was reeking with cold sweat.

His eyes had in them the wild look of the maniac. His lips twitched, while his breath came in spasmodic gasps.

"What do you say now, Senor Manuel Morilla?" demanded the Spaniard.

By an effort the Cuban managed to reply:

"I say nothing."

"You are still my brother, then," murmured the girl, proudly.

"Senor Manuel, let me tell you what we are about to do to your sister. In a moment I shall put a question to you. If you do not say yes—well, we shall use this!"

From a sheath at his belt the Spaniard drew out a keen-edged knife.

"The first refusal shall cost your sister an ear—the right ear, let us say. The second refusal means the other ear. Next the eyes shall be put out, one after the other. In two minutes from now, if you do not yield, we shall have made the senorita Anita one of the most pitiful, repulsive creatures that ever walked the earth."

"Yes, you will—not!" muttered watching Hal, vengefully. "In two minutes, captain, you shall be face to face with your patron, the devil!"

Noiselessly, Hal reached for his revolver.

So absorbed had he been in the scene that he was hardly aware of what his men had been doing.

Now a glance showed him that they were disposing of themselves along the slope, each seeking a position from which he could do effective work.

"These boys in blue are all right," muttered Hal, approvingly.

So carefully had they taken their places of observation that no warning had been given to the Spaniards.

"Do you agree to our demands?" queried the Spaniard, persistently.

The Cuban did not reply, this time, even by a groan.

He seemed about to faint. Had he not been tied as he was, he would doubtless have fallen to the ground.

"Carramba, then, since you will have it so!"

One step the Spaniard took toward the helpless girl, then paused to run his thumb gloatingly along the edge of the blade.

As he did so, he turned to look over his shoulder at the agonized brother.

That poor wretch had shut his eyes, or else they had closed involuntarily from faintness.

"Prepare, senorita, to feel the pleasure of suffering for your country," sneered the Spaniard, turning once more to regard her.

Then he took a step toward her. The next would have carried him to the side of the still unflinching girl.

But he never took that step.

From up on the brow of the hill a

HAVE YOU BEEN INTRODUCED TO ROXY?

sharp shot rang out from Hal Maynard's revolver.

Through the dastard's brain crashed that well-aimed ball, sending the dead man to earth in a heap.

Right on the heels of the first shot a swift, irregular volley rang out.

Dead men were piling up fast in the gully. The two lieutenants lay beside their captain.

"Los Yankees! Cubanos! To arms!" shouted a sargento, striving to rally his surviving comrades.

"To the death! No quarter to any of them!" rang back the American cry.

CHAPTER VII.

A BRAVE MAN.

Mercy is not born of battle.

When enemies hate each other—and enemies generally do—the thought of being merciful to the foe does not come until the heat of the fight is over.

Uncle Sam's regulars, in battle, are able to fire more than twenty shots a minute.

Lieutenant Hal's men now pumped lead into the enemy up to the limit.

Before that leaden storm nothing could live that encountered it.

Like chaff before the breeze the Spaniards fell.

Before they could get their guns, and aim for the reply, the company was all but wiped out.

A half a dozen of the little brown soldiers, realizing the bitter hopelessness of the fight, turned to run.

After them Hal's men turned their rifles, bringing down three of them after their first leaps toward safety.

A moment later the fourth was brought down.

Only two escaped into the brush.

Cr-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-rack!

A frightful volley swept the thicket. Death stalked in there to look for the two fugitives.

There was also still some firing down into the gully. Some of Uncle Sam's men, blinded to passion by the fiendish sight they had just witnessed, had determined that the wounded were not fit to live.

"No firing on injured men!" rang Hal's resolute command over the popping rifles.

But a few of the men either failed to hear, or refused to obey.

"This firing on the wounded must go no further!" grated Hal, springing to his feet.

Swish! Out came his sabre. Raising it aloft, he darted down the hillside into the thick of his own men's fire.

It was a courageous thing to do, for death was busy there.

One shot, not intended for him, whirled off our hero's already riddled sombrero. Another struck him in the calf of his left leg. A dozen more whizzed about him, but Hal kept on until he stood among the wounded, holding up his sabre.

In the meantime, Lieutenant Smithson, equally gallant, was running back of his squad calling out to the firing ones to cease.

But it was the apparition of Lieutenant Maynard, at the focussed point of danger, that had the most effect in calling the men to their senses.

As if by magic the shooting ceased.

"Lieutenant," our hero called to Smithson, "send down a sergeant and ten men to look after the wounded."

With that, Hal bounded to the side of the girl strapped to the cot.

Her eyes were closed. There was no sign of breathing.

Hal's heart gave a great throb, but a

"THE LIVING TARGET" IS GREAT.

second and longer glance showed that there was no sign of blood about her.

She had not been shot, then. Uncle Sam's men in blue, excited as they had been, had carefully refrained from firing too close to the senorita.

With his sheath knife Hal slashed away the straps, seated himself at the head of the litter and took her head in his lap.

"Have any of you men a drop of liquor?" he asked.

One of the soldiers handed over a flask, from which Maynard poured a few drops into the girl's mouth.

But it took a second, and a third small dose, to open her eyes.

"You are safe, senorita," declared Hal, in Spanish. "Now I will give your brother a moment's attention."

Laying her head down tenderly on the litter, Hal paused an instant to note the way that the squad under the sergeant attended to the wounded.

"You're doing well, boys," he observed. "Don't be rough. Remember that the enemy, when wounded, are entitled to as tender care as our own boys."

The gently spoken admonition, with no reference to the late excited and ungenerous conduct of some of them, had its effect upon the men.

They went about more softly, handled the wounds of the Spanish with a more tender touch.

Mercy glides in, after the battle!

After producing this effect, Lieutenant Maynard stepped over to the tree to which the young Cuban was bound.

A few slashes liberated Senor Morilla.

He was half unconscious—much too weak to stand. Hal supported him with his left arm, while his right hand sought the Cuban's in a warm clasp.

"Senor Morilla," thrilled the American, "I salute you as a brave man. I

heard what passed. We interfered when the moment came. Take a little of this for strength."

Our hero held the flask to the other's lips. Morilla took a swallow eagerly, then pushed the flask away.

"My sister?" he asked, tremulously.

"We will go to her," was Hal's soothing answer.

"She is unhurt?"

"Absolutely."

"I thank God for that. Senor, your coming was almost more than a providence. I fainted, I imagine, before your men ceased firing."

While the Cuban was speaking, Hal had slowly turned him around.

Now they saw the Senorita Anita on her feet. She had struggled up from the litter, filled with a sister's solicitude.

"Wait, senorita," hailed Hal. "We are coming to you."

She had overtaxed her strength. She would have fallen had not Hal, supporting her brother, called to a soldier who sprang forward and clutched at the girl's arm.

"Get them both out of here," ordered Hal. "This is no place for a woman. Senorita, be kind enough to sit on the litter, and two of our good fellows will carry you up the slope."

Anita unresistingly obeyed, and two of the soldiers carried the litter up out of the gully, beyond the scene of carnage.

"Throw your arm around my neck, Senor Morilla," urged Hal. "By doing so, you will find walking much more easy."

He helped the brave young Cuban half way up the slope, then halted for a few moments under the shade of a tree, sending one of the men for the Cuban's clothing, which lay on the ground close to the tree under which he had suffered so much.

EVERYONE, EXCEPT CRIMINALS, LIKE NICK CARTER.

"One of our doctors will put oil on those burns," suggested Maynard, as the Cuban, with many a wincing, drew on his attire over that seared, sore flesh.

In a little while Morilla was able to be assisted up to where his sister sat under another tree with two soldiers offering her food and water, while others looked interestedly on.

Smithson, too, hovered near by, for the Cuban girl was pretty and the young second lieutenant was impressionable.

In fact, Smithson looked slightly disappointed when Hal murmured in his ear:

"We'd better go down below, old chap. We must find out how many we've killed and wounded, and bury the former."

"There ought to be a special grade of non-commissioned officers to do that work," grumbled Smithson, but he went readily enough.

Twenty-eight killed, forty-four wounded—that was the terrible count-up. All three of the officers were among the perished.

"As for you, you miserable scoundrel," apostrophized Hal, looking down into the captain's face, malignant looking even in death, "I am not sorry for my bullet. As for these chaps," he went on, turning to look at the two lieutenants, they may have been made of better stuff. I hope they were."

"All Spaniards look alike to me," spoke Smithson, cynically.

Hal gave him a swift look, but uttered no reproving reply.

"The young man will know more, as soon as he has seen more of the real horrors of war," thought the first lieutenant. "He's a good fellow, and a gallant one, but he has the same savage feelings that I felt when I first made fighting my profession."

"Set a burial detail to work," Hal ordered, aloud, and then went back to see how the work of caring for the wounded was going on.

Every American soldier in the field carries a package of things needed for the first aid to the wounded.

These packages were open, now, and, under the spurring words of their commander, the soldiers were doing generous work for the bleeding enemy.

Two of the Spaniards died while being attended. These were added to the heaps in the trenches.

"See that the trenches are well covered, and that some kind of a slab is put up telling how many soldiers and officers lie here," directed Hal, and then hastened back to the two Cubans.

They had considerably recovered by this time. Manuel Morilla now lay on the litter, while the Senorita Anita sat beside it and held his hand.

"Are you able to talk now?" queried Hal, seating himself on the ground by the other side of the litter.

"Si, senor, but if I talked until the sun goes down, I could not begin to express my gratitude to you for—"

"We have no time to talk about that now," broke in Hal, briskly, "and it would not be worth while if we had. Now, senor, to business. I have served in the Cuban army, and, if I mistake not you are an officer in it."

"I am a lieutenant colonel," replied the young man, with a flush of pride.

"You belong to Garcia's army?"

"Si, senor. I went out from Daiquiri last night with a party of Cuban scouts. We were surprised, and all my men killed. Those who were only wounded the Spaniards dispatched with machetes. Me, alone, they spared. I was expected back in town with news of the Spaniards' whereabouts. Those fiends whom you

rightly shot down were trying to make me swear that I would carry false news and lead the American troops into an ambush. Last night my sister slept in a house back of the town where I thought she was safe. The fiends found her, and brought her here. They tried, by torturing us both, to make us fall in with the Spanish plans, and force us to lead the first American brigade to defeat and death."

"Again I thank you for your grit," exclaimed Hal, pressing Morilla's hand warmly.

"But I must tell you, senor, how the Spaniards are really disposed along the road."

"By doing so, you will win my gratitude. It was just for that I came out here."

"Have you a pencil, senor."

Hal handed him one.

"And some paper?"

A few sheets of this also came out of our hero's haversack.

"Be kind enough to help me to sit up, senor," and Hal did so, getting at his back.

With rapid strokes Morilla sketched a plan of the surrounding country.

"Why, that is nothing less than an excellent map," cried Lieutenant Maynard.

"Before the war, senor, I was a civil engineer," and Morilla went on sketching.

"Now, here is the disposition of the troops at two o'clock this morning," added the Cuban, marking in the number of the Spanish battalions and the positions they occupied.

"They hold every hill of any consequence between here and Siboney," uttered Hal.

"That is true, senor."

"Will they fight resolutely?"

"To the death, I think, senor, for they hate the Yankees even more than they do the Cubans."

"Whew!" muttered Hal. "The plan was to send a regiment or two to Siboney by easy stages. We expected to be in possession there by noon, or early in the afternoon."

"Senor, if but one or two regiments attempt to get to Siboney they will be shot down like sheep," replied Morilla, going on to mark in the positions of more battalions.

"Great Scott!" palpitated Hal, opening his eyes wide with surprise. "We expected nothing but a few skirmishes. If we don't have a fight this side of there, we'll have a pitched battle near Siboney."

"Here are two more battalions to go on the map," added Morilla, marking them down.

"And within three-quarters of a mile of here!"

"If they haven't moved, senor."

Smithson came up at this moment to report that the burial detail had done its work, and that the wounded were as well attended to as could be done.

"Lieutenant," replied Hal, "there are supposed to be two battalions of the enemy close to us."

The young second lieutenant looked astonished.

"Send out eight men by twos to reconnoitre for two or three hundred yards ahead. Go with one of the pairs yourself. Post a man here to watch for any signals that you may want to send back."

Smithson started with fire in his eye. He was burning to distinguish himself that day. Every order that meant a chance of fighting or risk delighted him.

"He's a general in embryo," mused Hal, gazing after his second in command.

"NICK CARTER'S DETECTIVE SCHOOL" IS FINE.

Then he pulled out his dispatch book and began to write.

"Senor Morilla," he explained, as he finished writing, "I am going to detail two men to carry you back on this litter. Your sister must accompany you, for, once among the Americans at Daiquiri, she will be safe. I am also sending a message back. With your permission I will keep this map until I have been able to find out whether the Spaniards occupy the same positions they did when you came through."

"Lieutenant Smithson is signaling, sir," called the man who had been posted.

Hal sprang to his feet, running up to the top of the hill.

Smithson stood on a hillside, two hundred yards away, swinging his sword.

"By Jove!" muttered Hal, "he's using the regular signal code. He wants to know if I understand what he is saying."

Drawing his sabre, our hero made the passes which spelled:

"Y-e-s."

"Spaniards coming," signaled back Smithson. "Two battalions, I think."

"How near is the advance?" waved back Hal.

Back came the startling news:

"Within about a hundred yards!"

CHAPTER VIII.

FORWARD!

"Come back! Call in all scouts! Hurry!"

That was the peremptory order that Hal flashed to Smithson.

The situation was more than serious. With the enemy in overwhelming force within three hundred yards, Hal Maynard realized the peril of escorting a litter that could not be carried at more than a fast walk.

"Start that litter now," he ordered.

"Go as fast as you can and remember that we shall cover your retreat while a man lasts. And you," calling up another soldier, "carry this dispatch on the run to the commander of the nearest American troops."

The recalled scouts had covered more than half the distance in when the advance of the Spaniards showed their heads over the neighboring hills.

Hal, with his men lying down, was ready for them with a fierce volley.

It was answered by a hot but useless volley from the Spanish.

Smithson, with his eight men showed a disposition to stop where he was, but Hal shouted out:

"Don't fight there, sir. Work your men in as safely as you can."

Reluctantly enough Smithson gave up his notion of fighting where he was, and brought his men in creeping, Hal and his men making the air as hot for the enemy as possible.

"Hold this hill, sir?" questioned the young lieutenant, as soon as he reached the main party.

"Not by a jugful," was Hal's vehement answer. "We've got to cover the retreat of that litter, but we'll fall back on our reserve as fast as we can consistently."

A minute later the retreat began.

The Spaniards followed up their advantage eagerly, but every time that our hero's men halted and fired they did so to such good advantage that the enemy wavered somewhat.

At the same time, the enemy's fire wounded three of our hero's men, who now had to be helped along the road.

In the meantime, the courier with the dispatch had made good use of his legs.

Fortunately the battalion of support, hearing the firing, had started forward,

NICK CARTER IS EVER UP-TO-DATE.

metting the courier before he was far on the way.

How that battalion came moving into the fight. There was no hurrah business, but the soldiers moved as if they meant to get on the spot as quickly as possible.

Turning, Hal saw that litter go through the support line.

"Our work is done," he called out. "Fall back, and assemble behind the support."

Saying which, Maynard gave an arm to one of the wounded men, Smithson helping another.

Seeing this move, the battalion fired over their heads, with such good effect as to keep the enemy too low to do effective work upon the fugitives.

At best it was an exciting run. Had the Spaniards been braver, Lieutenant Hal would have lost a large percentage of his command.

As it was, he retreated through the support line without any more losses.

Here, after seeing that the litter containing Morilla was well on its way to Daiquiri, Hal sought out the major commanding the battalion.

"How much further do your orders take you, lieutenant?" queried the senior officer.

"About three-quarters of a mile, sir."

"And then?"

"I am to use my discretion, major; but from what I have learned I should not be surprised if I look into Siboney to-day. There's a great game of strategy to be played."

"You will wait until we get those fellows over yonder on the run?"

"I fear, major, that that will take too long," was the boy's dry answer. "Their position is as good as yours, and they have more than twice as many men. Instead of waiting, I am only giving my

boys breathing time, and then I mean to push by, and sneak along the flanks of the fight."

"Good heavens, boy, don't do that," expostulated the major. "If you get past these Spaniards, you are likely to find your small command between two bodies of the enemy."

"I would have that misfortune, sir, if I were to keep to the road. But I think I know where all of the enemy are, and I don't mean to keep to the road."

"Good luck to you, then, my boy," replied the major, but he looked uneasy.

No sooner were Maynard's men in condition to move than he led them further to the rear, plunged into the woods, and started by the enemy's flanks.

"Still firing on both sides, without advancing," observed our hero to his second in command. "Without one side or the other gets more troops, the battle is likely to last for hours."

"While we, sir——?"

"Are going to push through Siboney, if we can make it."

Smithson's eyes snapped with anticipation. The day's tactics were becoming more to his liking.

"Study this map," urged Maynard, pressing it into the second lieutenant's hands.

"I think I know it pretty well now, sir," said Smithson, after five minutes more of tramping.

"You saw, then, that the next position we will pass is a quarter of a mile from here, where one company of the enemy occupy trenches on either side of the road from which they can enfilade any advancing force."

"I saw the position on the map."

"I want you to detach yourself, with eight men, and go to reconnoitre that position."

"Thank you," cried Smithson, eagerly.

READ "BOB FERRET'S TROLLEY TRAIL."

"Take no needless risks, and report back to me as quickly as you can."

Full of vim, Smithson started off.

Ten minutes later Hal Maynard stopped plump. He heard firing to the right.

"Confound it," he muttered, uneasily, "has Smithson gotten himself into trouble? Left wheel, men. Double quick, march!"

Before they had gone a hundred and fifty yards, they met eight men coming pell-mell through the brush, with three of their number slightly wounded.

"What has happened?" demanded Hal, though with a premonition of what the reply would be.

"Ran into the Spanish, sir," replied one of the men. "Lieutenant Smithson thought he could take the trench."

"And Lieutenant Smithson?"

"Was captured, sir."

"You eight men came back to tell me that?" questioned Lieutenant Maynard, sternly.

"We tried to save him, sir," protested the soldier, "but the game was too stiff."

"Its not too stiff for me, if I live," grated Hal, vaulting into the saddle of the horse he had been leading.

"Smithson may be rash," he muttered under his breath, "but he is too brave a boy to desert in this fix. If I can't get him out, I don't want to come out of these Cuban woods alive."

Then, in a low but firm tone, he gave the order:

"Forward!"

CHAPTER IX.

A THRILLING RESCUE.

Lieutenant Smithson sat on a grassy hammock under a cocoanut palm.

He was nursing a grievance. Fate and his own impetuosity had put him out of the fight. He wanted to get back into

the campaign but that was clearly impossible.

His trim looking sword, only a few weeks in his possession, now dangled at the belt of a Spanish captain. His revolver with which he had learned to do such pretty shooting, was now, holster and all, the property of the Spanish lieutenant who sat under a near-by tree indolently smoking a cigarette.

Some of the soldiers had just carried away for burial two of the enemy's privates who Smithson had been impetuous enough to kill before he was obliged to surrender.

Smithson had not been bound. Plainly the Spanish officer in command felt reasonably sure that this well-groomed Yankee pig would not succeed in eluding the vigilance of the pair of soldiers who stood guarding him with cocked rifles.

"Confound the luck!" roared Smithson. He spoke in English, a language which the enemy did not understand, but they feared he might be calling to some prowling friend in the bush, and one of the sentinels, stepping quickly forward, dealt him a slap across the mouth.

"Confound your cheek!" bellowed Smithson, leaping to his feet.

Heedless of the guns that were almost thrust in his face, he caught the ill-mannered sentinel by the shoulder, wheeled him about and administered a kick that hurt.

Then there was commotion in the camp.

The captain and his lieutenant hurried up, talking and gesticulating at once.

Soldiers, sullen and scowling, poked their rifles at him.

But Smithson eyed the whole crowd imperturbably.

"You won't shoot me," he jeered.

"There'll be too many of your walnut-stained apes in the American guard pens. You'll need me to exchange for some of

BOB FERRET IS ONE OF NICK CARTER'S DEFTEST PUPILS.

them. Bluff all you want, you little undersizelings, but you can't cause a wrinkle of worry to mar the smoothness of brow of Smithson, "98."

The Spaniards concluded to let it pass as a misunderstanding.

Smithson resumed his seat on the hammock, and went on cursing at fate and the rashness that had led him into this fix.

"Maynard has a level head, and has twice as much grit as I, into the bargain. He warned me about just such a fool move as I have gone and made. Perhaps I've lost half of my men, too. I don't know—it was all so sudden. Confound me—what an ass I've been!"

Smithson's nerves were working up to a dangerous pitch. He kicked a pebble so savagely that it bounded and struck one of the Spaniards in the calf of his leg.

Then another complication threatened. The soldier complained to his captain, and the latter seemed more than half inclined to give ear to the complaint.

"I wish you monkeys would kill me," muttered Smithson, disgustedly. "I can never face Maynard again!"

But the storm blew over, without serious consequences, for the Spanish captain was sensible enough to realize that an American officer might have great future value for exchange purposes.

"What an ass I was!" Smithson again exclaimed, in a tone full of disgust. "I might be poking around a free man through these woods, and getting many a shot at the Spaniards, instead of being forced to sit here under the guard of these dirty wretches."

How the young second lieutenant's heart would have bounded had he but known that at that moment Hal Maynard's resolute eyes were surveying the camp from up the slope.

Hal was there, and so were his men.

Realizing how much of imperative duty he had yet to perform elsewhere our hero did not propose to risk a pitched battle if it could be avoided, but he was determined to get Smithson out of his unenviable predicament.

"Smithson is sorry for his rashness, and in a frame of mind to appreciate a rescue," muttered the young commander.

Then he turned and retraced his steps to where two of his sergeants were standing.

They were regulars who had been in the service some twenty years, steady, reliable men who had been often under fire in Indian campaigns and who had gained coolness.

"I want you to divide the force up. Sergeant Gallupe, you will station your squad just up ahead, prepared to cover my retreat. Sergeant Lawton, I want you to manœuvre your men over to the enemy's left, prepared to give them a flank fire when Sergeant Gallupe begins in front. Make it as hot as you can. I want the brown rascals to think they've been attacked by a superior force. Watch me, Gallupe, for I want you to be ready on the instant when I start back."

"When you start back?" repeated the sergeant, wonderingly.

"Certainly. I am going into the enemy's camp alone."

Gallupe and Lawton gasped.

"On horseback, of course," added Hal.

"For God's sake, don't do it, lieutenant," urged Gallupe. "You will be shot to pieces."

"Somebody must go after Smithson."

"Won't you lead us all down there, lieutenant? We can whip them."

"We would lose too many men," explained Hal. "This is a scouting detail, on serious business for the army, and I have no right to sacrifice so many lives."

"But, good heavens, lieutenant, if you

JACK BURTON IS A PROMISING YOUNG DETECTIVE.

go down there all alone you'll be slaughtered."

"I know its the chance. But I've no right to risk you all, neither can I leave Smithson to himself."

"But lieutenant," urged the sergeant, with a tear or two in his eyes, "it's the height of rashness for you to go alone."

"I believe," said Hal, with a slight smile, "that my reputation has been for something else than rashness."

"Careful for your men, yes, lieutenant, but can't you have some care for yourself?"

"Not in this case," negatived Hal, decisively. "If I get out of these woods alive, Smithson will be with me. Do your parts as I've instructed you, and leave the rest to Heaven."

Saying which, Hal thrust his left foot into the stirrup.

Up he went, securing a firm seat in saddle.

As he picked up the bridle, his intelligent horse stepped forward.

Trained in the cavalry, the beast seemed to know the need of caution.

With as much apparent unconcern as if he expected merely to pot a squirrel, Lieutenant Hal's hand traveled back to his holster.

Slowly unfastening the flap, he drew out his forty-five Colts, looked into the cylinder, and then threw his gaze ahead once more.

As he neared the top of the hill, he gave his steed a nudge with his knees that caused the animal to step as softly as a mouse would have done.

The beast went more slowly, too. Hal had time to sweep the brush in every direction.

Silent as so many spectres, his men crept to their places.

At the very brow of the hill Maynard

paused for a moment. The trees screened him yet from the view of the enemy.

"Slowly, old chap," whispered Hal, giving his horse its head once more.

The ride down the slope had begun.

"Gracious!" palpitated Hal, all of a sudden.

Ahead he had caught the unexpected glint of steel.

Squarely in his path, not more than thirty feet ahead stood a picket of four Spanish soldiers whom he had not seen before.

Leaning upon guns to which the bayonets were fixed, and plainly with no notion of more enemies near, these Spaniards were listlessly chatting when a pebble kicked by Hal's horse came rolling down the slope toward them.

Now they became alert in a jiffy—in the same instant that Maynard made the only move left to him by urging his horse into a gallop.

They saw him coming when he was almost upon them.

There was but one thing left to do. Without time to aim and fire, the soldiers fell in by pairs. Each pair crossed their guns in the rider's path, opposing an effective barrier of steel.

Effective? It seemed so. But it was already too late for our hero to rein up.

"Go it old chap," yelled the young officer, and the splendid animal gave a longer leap.

"Up-yah!" yelled Lieutenant Hal.

Superbly his horse rose, clearing the barricade of bayonets interposed by the Spanish pickets.

Hurrah! He touched ground again on the other side, leaving behind him the four most amazed soldiers in the Spanish army.

They could not fire, now, for fear of shooting into their own comrades.

THE MOST FAMOUS CRIMES ARE TOLD IN NICK CARTER WEEKLY.

"Go it!" rattled Hal, digging in his spurs.

Madly the beast rushed down the hill. It was only by a miracle that it did not stumble.

Startled beyond discription, the Spaniards encamped there leaped to their feet.

"Another Yankee," laughed the Spanish captain. "Heaven is raining them upon us to-day!"

But the laughing look in his face died quickly out, for Hal swiftly raised his revolver.

There was a snapping report, a flash, a tiny cloud of smoke. The Spanish captain would never command again!

Straight to where Smithson stood raced our hero. The Spanish sentinels were compelled to dodge to avoid being run under hoofs.

"Smithson, old chap!"

"Maynard, you trump!"

Crack! Hal's bullet keeled over one Spaniard who showed signs of recovering from the stampede.

"Up with you, Smithson! Up behind!"

Hal's snorting horse reined up just at the side of the second lieutenant.

It was an adventure after Smithson's own heart. He retrieved his former rashness, too, by his promptness now.

At the first command to mount he made a flying leap into the air, clutching at Hal, who sat as steady as a rock, and throwing his legs squarely across the beast's back.

Wheel! Maynard brought the horses' head around like a flash.

Crack! And another Spaniard bit the dust.

It had all been done in a twinkling. Hal was headed up the slope by the time that the Spaniards reached their weapons.

They needed them! Br-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r!

Sergeant Gallupe's squad had opened fire, and the foe were dropping on all sides.

Br-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r! Sergeant Lawton's squad sent in a murderous fire from the left flank.

That latest attack fairly demoralized the enemy.

They began to shoot, and went on shooting, but it was evident that they believed themselves to be attacked by a force much their superiors in numbers.

"Hit, sir," reported Smithson, before they were halfway up the hill.

"Where?"

"In the back, confound it!"

After them came a tempest of bullets. It was a wonder that Smithson was not riddled by this time.

He had left to a comrade the place of danger. Hal paled slightly as he realized this.

"Look out! Be ready!" came his warning cry.

"What's up?" queried Smithson.

"Going to change places. I'll ride in the rear myself!"

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

"No, sir! Won't hear of it," retorted Smithson.

He was too late. Hal had already leaped to the ground from the back of the rapidly traveling horse.

Holding by the animal's mane a fleeting instant to steady himself, Maynard next caught at the beast's flanks as it went by.

Bound! He was up, and holding on to Smithson to steady himself for a second.

"Forward, old man—into the saddle!" came Hal's commanding voice.

"I'm in, sir. Follow me up the back."

Holding on with one hand, Hal turned

HOW DO YOU LIKE "THE HUMAN FLY?"

to send his four remaining shots into the last-weakening Spaniards.

Fired on from two different directions, the Spaniards seemed not to know which way to shoot. By this time, half of them, in their excitement, were snapping the hammers of their pieces upon empty magazines.

Despite all this, Hal Maynard had never known a time when his fast-beating heart seemed so near his throat.

Bullets zipped and chugged against the trees all about them. The heel of Hal's boot was carried away by a Mauser bullet. His tin cup, hanging beside his canteen was riddled by two balls. The rim of his sombrero was torn away on one side by a spitefully singing bullet that made him dodge despite his coolness.

Through all the hail of death they reached the top of the hill.

With a rousing cheer their men made way for them to pass through the line of crouching marksmen.

"Over the hill is out!" cheered Hal, as the horse started down the other side of the slope. "Rein up, Smithson."

Quivering, the horse came to a halt. Hal was on the ground in an instant, stepping forward to look into his subordinate's face.

"How are you, Smithson?"

"All right," rejoined that young lieutenant, cheerily, "though the excitement has made me tremble like a leaf."

"Let me help you down. Lie on the ground. I want to look at your wound."

But as soon as he had helped Smithson to a recumbent position, our hero turned to call out to the sergeant:

"How are you getting along, Gallupe?"

"All right, sir, and the enemy ain't doing a thing but die."

Satisfied, Maynard went to work to cut away Smithson's clothing to look at the wound. It was not a dangerous one, though it bled considerably.

"You're all right, now, for the present," spoke Hal, cheerily, as he pasted the last strip of court plaster over the cotton bandage he had applied to the wound. "Now, get up on my horse and ride. It will be easier for you."

"I ride? Not by a long sight. I'm not an invalid yet."

"Who commands here?"

"You do, of course."

"Then up you go in saddle. Here, I'll give you an arm to help up."

"Maynard," cried Lieutenant Smithson, impulsively, as he got into saddle and reached down his right hand, "you're a brick, and I was a dodrotted fool."

"Bosh!" smiled Hal, returning the grasp warmly.

Then, leaving his new friend, he went back up the slope to Gallupe's firing line.

"Enemy are almost on the run, sir," reported the sergeant. "Lord, sir, but some one has been lying to us. These Spaniards are no cowards. They're dying down there as gamely as any men on earth could do the trick. They even tried two charges, but we chased 'em back."

"The Spaniards are brave enough," replied Hal, sinking upon the grass, for the enemy's fire, though waning, was still too brisk to be braved with impunity. If they knew as much about fighting as they do about courage, they'd give us a good deal more trouble."

He had the satisfaction, now, of seeing the foe retreat, leaving more than half their number upon the field.

"When they do run," observed Hal, with a dry laugh, "they run fast."

The gully belonged, at last, to the Americans. It had been hard fought for, with the satisfactory result that our men had lost not one.

Hal did not attempt to pursue the enemy. To do so would be, undoubtedly, to run up against a much larger number of the enemy, who would be sure to hurry forward as soon as they heard the firing.

"We'll drop into a thicket, now, at least three hundred yards from here," Hal confided to Smithson.

Though the latter was eager to know what new move was impending, he did not ask.

He had acquired, during that forenoon, a decidedly new impression of Lieutenant Hal Maynard. By now Smithson actually stood in awe of the genius of his superior.

Within five minutes they found just such a jungle as they sought, a thick

NICK CARTER IS AT THE HEAD OF ALL DETECTIVES.

tangle of grove and brush covering at least half an acre.

"We're safe in there," promised Hal, ordering his detachment into the jungle. "Spaniards have learned to give such a spot a wide berth through fear of Cuban sharpshooters."

Thoroughly wearied with their forenoon's work, each soldier threw himself upon the cool grass in that deep shade, heedless of the pestering mosquitoes.

"Post four men as guards. Let the rest sleep, if they want to, Mr. Smithson," directed Hal. "I'm going to take Corporal Reardon and Private Wells with me."

"Going far?" asked the second lieutenant, in an undertone.

"To Siboney. Three of us can move much more secretly than the whole command. Unless you are discovered and attacked, remain here until I return."

Accompanied by the two men he had selected, Hal went as far as the edge of the jungle before he turned to say, with a smile:

"Don't do any firing, unless you are attacked, Mr. Smithson."

"Be sure I won't, sir," replied the young second lieutenant, with feeling.

It is needless to follow Hal's wanderings for the next hour.

Keeping to the thicket with two picked followers, he made the trip to Siboney unhindered, and from a high hill, looked down into the little town with its short railroad running to Santiago.

On the way he had passed several Spanish commands of varying strength.

"Morilla's map was right," reflected Hal, as he gazed into the little town at his feet. "General Shafter can't help being satisfied with my report. Boys, we'll go back."

Turning, they made their way into the thicket once more.

By one jungle they had passed, and were headed for another, when—crack!

Corporal Reardon tottered, trugged to keep on his feet, but fell to the ground.

"Wells, find that sharpshooter—pot him," breathed Maynard quickly, but he spoke almost too late, for the private, bringing his rifle to his shoulder, fired before the command was finished.

"Got him," announced Wells, laconically, but with a world of satisfaction in his voice.

"Where are you hit?" asked Hal, bending by his corporal. "Never mind—I see it. In the side, and nasty, too."

The last of Hal's cotton and court plaster went to stanch that wound, Wells, meanwhile, mounting vigilant guard.

"Can you get on your feet and walk?" asked Hal, anxiously.

"Yes, sir," came the swift, gritty answer. Reardon tried to prove his boast, but was obliged to sink back to the ground.

"Better leave me, sir, I guess," gasped the plucky fellow. "I can crawl into a thicket until you send some one to find me."

"Nonsense," retorted Hal, energetically. "Lie limp—so. There you are."

He picked Reardon up in his arms. The Irishman was no light load, but Hal's young arms were those of an athlete. He carried his corporal easily at first, but a last found himself obliged to halt every hundred yards or so to rest.

"Let me have a turn or so at carrying him," urged Private Wells.

"Not for worlds," rejoined Hal. "You are too good a man with a rifle, Wells. I want you to save all our lives by keeping your optics peeled for sharpshooters."

At one point their detour led them around the edge of a bluff close to the sea. Here there was a rocky ridge wide enough for a well man to walk by in safety.

"We'll rest a minute before trying that," announced Hal, placing his corporal on the grass.

"Is that a sharpshooter, sir?" whispered Wells, touching our hero's shoulder.

Our hero turned, just as Wells, after a careful scrutiny, added:

"Its all right, sir—nothing but a log."

Hal turned about again, just in time to see Reardon, disgusted with his own weakness, rise and start out on the narrow road.

"Here, don't do that," spoke Maynard, authoritatively.

He spoke at least five seconds too late. Reardon reeled, then plunged over the bluff.

CRIMINALS OF ALL KINDS FEAR NICK CARTER.

"Good heavens!" palpitated Hal, and prang forward, just as the corporal's faint voice came up to him:

"All right, sir. Lucky. Caught at some bushes forty feet down, sir."

"Hold on, old fellow," cried Hal. "I'm going to get down to you—somehow."

The first ten feet down the rocky slope were made with comparative ease.

Then Hal slipped. It was the last he remembered.

But Private Wells gazed down with awe-struck face for an instant before he rose to his feet and darted away for help.

Hal lay on a cot under a tent canvas when he came to.

He had a faint realization, just as his senses returned, that his lips had been brushed by the velvety mouth of Anita Morilla.

She fled from the tent, a picture of pretty confusion, when our hero opened his eyes.

But there was another comer in an instant, for General Shafter entered the tent, followed by his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Miley, who in turn supported Lieutenant Smithson.

"You've played a great game of strategy to-day, Maynard, my boy," spoke the old general, kindly, as he rested one hand on the young officer's brow. "The information that you've brought in verified by your own observation, has undoubtedly been the means of saving many hundreds of American lives."

"I'm satisfied, general, if you are," smiled Hal, sitting up as his head became clearer.

"Satisfied?" echoed Shafter. "To-

day, young man, you've been my right hand!"

[THE END.]

A rare treat is promised for our readers next week. It is a story full of fight—the kind of fighting that has been done by our grand old Americans in Cuba, and described by a witness of the events he tells about. Mr. Douglas Wells, who pens these fascinating tales from the front, has been everywhere in Cuba where the fighting has been going on, and at the moment when friend and foe were firing into each other. He knows what he is writing about, and therefore his tales are trebly worth the reading. Don't miss "Hal on the Skirmish Line; or, Fighting for the 'Queen of the Red Cross,'" which will appear complete in next week's issue of the *Starry Flag Weekly*, No. 14

SPECIAL NOTICE!

Owing to the fact that some of our publications are printed considerably in advance of issue, it was impossible to begin our badge and button premium offer in all on a simultaneous date. Our readers are notified that all copies of the *Tip Top Weekly*, *Starry Flag*, *True Blue*, *Diamond Dick, Jr.*, *Nick Carter Weekly* and *Klondike Kit*, dated June 25, 1898, or later, are available under this offer (see page 32), and should you have copy of any of these dated June 25 or later, and WHICH CONTAINS NO COUPON ON PAGE 32, cut out the heading and date from the front cover, and it will be accepted by us in lieu of a coupon under the conditions of the offer. Headings will not be accepted as coupons where the coupon is published on page 32 of the same number.



HOW TO DO BUSINESS.

This book is a guide to success in life, embracing Principles of Business, Choice of Pursuit, Buying and Selling, General Management, Mechanical Trades, Manufacturing, Bookkeeping, Causes of Success and Failure, Business Maxims and Forms, etc. It also contains an appendix of complete business forms and a dictionary of commercial terms. No young man should be without this valuable book. It gives complete information about trades, professions and occupation in which any young man is interested. Price ten cents. Address

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Red, White and Blue Quarterly.

The earlier issues of Red, White and Blue are now on sale in the form of Quarterlies, each including 13 consecutive issues of this favorite weekly, together with the 13 original illuminated illustrations, and an elegant cover in colors. The price is 50 Cents per volume for which sum they will be sent by mail post-paid to any address in the United States.

- - NOW READY. - -

No. 1, including Nos. 1 to 13 of Red, White and Blue.
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No. 3, " Nos. 27 to 39 of Red, White and Blue.
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If your Newsdealer has not got the Quarterlies, remit direct to the publishers,

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AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHY

Many people imagine that a photographer's camera is a difficult machine to handle, and that the work is dirty and disagreeable. This is a mistake. Photography is a clean, light, and pleasant accomplishment, within the reach of all. The camera will prove a friend, reporter, and helper. With a very inexpensive camera any boy or girl can now learn not only to take good pictures, but pictures that there is everywhere a demand for at remunerative prices. A complete guide to this fascinating art, entitled AMATEUR MANUAL OF PHOTOGRAPHY, will be sent on receipt of ten cents.

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WRESTLING.

History tells us that wrestling was the first form of athletic pastime. Without doubt, it gives strength and firmness, combined with quickness and pliability, to the limbs, vigor to the body, coolness and discrimination to the head and elasticity to the temper, the whole forming an energetic combination of the greatest power to be found in man. The book is entitled PROFESSOR MULDOON'S WRESTLING. It is fully illustrated, and will be sent postpaid on receipt of ten cents. Address

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Show Your Colors!

Every American boy should wear a patriotic emblem to show where his sympathies lie in these stirring times of war.

Messrs. Street & Smith have made arrangements to present a patriotic badge or button to every reader of their popular publications for boys. The conditions are easy. Read them.

We publish six 32-page, illuminated cover weeklies for boys, retailing for five cents each, as follows:

The True Blue,
The Starry Flag,
The Tip Top Weekly,

The Klondike Kit Weekly,
The Nick Carter Weekly,
The Diamond Dick, Jr.

We wish the readers of one series to become acquainted with the entire line. On and after the present date the coupon at the foot of this column will be printed in each one of the above-mentioned publications. Three coupons, each clipped from a different publication, mailed to our office, will entitle you to one of the following, sent to your address, post-paid, free of all expense.

1. American Flag, embossed on gold ground, button or pin as preferred.
2. Aluminum Medal with Admiral Dewey's portrait on front, and picture of the Maine on reverse, pendant, from Aluminum emblem.
3. The American Flag, in metal, embossed in red, white, blue and gold. Three styles—button, scarf pin and ladies' hat pin. State your choice.
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5. Silk Bow, with American and Cuban flags combined, or American flag alone, as preferred.
6. Celluloid American Flag on pin.
7. Button 1-4 inches in diameter in the following designs:
A—American Flag. B—Cuban Flag. C—American and Cuban Flags together. D—American and English Flags together. E—Admiral Dewey. F—Admiral Sampson. G—Battleship Maine. H—"Now, will you be good." I—The Iowa. J—The Oregon. K—The Massachusetts. L—The Indiana. M—The Brooklyn. N—The Columbia. O—The Texas. P—General Lee (order by letter and number, as 7-B., 7-D., etc.)

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Send in your coupon. Remember this is a purely gratuitous gift on our part, intended to call your attention to others of our publications besides the ones you are now purchasing. If you cannot procure what you desire from your newsdealer, send us ten cents and one coupon, and we will send you by return mail a copy of two other publications and the badge which you may select. Address your coupons to

STREET & SMITH'S PREMIUM DEPT., 81 Fulton Street, New York.

"Weiss, and that sharpshooter—put him," breathed Maynard quickly, but he spoke almost too late, for the private, bringing his rifle to his shoulder, fired before the command was finished.

Here, don't do that," spoke Maynard authoritatively.

He spoke at least five seconds to Reardon reeled, then plunged over bluff.

CRIMINALS OF ALL KINDS FEAR NICK CARTER.

"Naval Stories by a Naval Officer." TRUE BLUE

The Best Naval Library Published

This weekly is devoted to the stirring adventures of Our Boys in Blue. The famous naval author, Ensign Clarke Fitch, U. S. N., has been engaged exclusively to write for this library.

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The Latest and Best Series of Stories of Detective Work.

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